

Reemployment Services for UI Claimants

NH Employment Security (NHES) is expecting to receive \$269,663 for Program Year 2004 from the United States Department of Labor for the purposes of providing reemployment services for UI claimants. This document is the planning proposal for NHES as required by Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 5-04 dated September 24, 2004.

NHES continues to work more closely with the Wagner-Peyser staff in the local offices in an attempt to increase the number of Wagner-Peyser staff assisted applicants entering employment either through direct or non-direct placement. For the program year ending June 30, 2000, the number of individuals entering employment on the ETA 9002 was 6,907. For the program year ending June 30, 2001, the number of individuals entering employment on the ETA 9002 was 8,846. For the program year ending June 30, 2002, the same report shows the number of individuals entering employment at 13,339. The comparison of these statistics with the count of individuals who received a reportable service during the same time period reflects an entered employment rate of 43%, 42%, and 49%, respectively, for the program years mentioned. The entered employment rate used in this paragraph is based on the definition used in the ETA 9002 prior to July 1, 2002.

Comparable statistics for program year ending June 30, 2003 and June 30, 2004 are no longer available due to changes in the reporting requirements for the ETA 9002 report. The data for the program year ending June 30, 2003 indicates the following. The ETA 9002C reports that of the individuals registered from July 1, 2002 to June 30, 2003 who satisfy the definitions of the ETA 9002C, 38,151 entered employment for an entered employment rate of 71%. Of the 38,151 who entered employment, 25,709 entered employment after receiving some staff assisted services, for an entered employment rate following staff assisted services of 67%. Comparable numbers for the program year ending June 30, 2004 (PY 2003) are not available at this time.

As stated in previous reports and meetings, NHES is providing reemployment services to UI claimants. The Eligibility Review Program is part of the services available to the UI population. As part of this program, NHES staff provides, including but not limited to, assessment, job referral, job development, workshops, and referral to supportive services. Staff meet with UI claimants on average every three weeks, review their work search efforts and provide guidance for reemployment activities. The staff in the offices concentrate their efforts on reemployment services for the UI population, working with as many of these customers as is feasible for their workload and staff size.

Objective: Enhance direct reemployment service delivery for UI claimants

The primary objective for Program Year 2004 will remain as it was for Program Year 2003: to enhance direct reemployment service delivery for UI claimants. NHES, with the

additional monies provided through this program, will continue staffing a person in each of our five medium sized offices dedicated to staff assistance for UI claimants in their efforts toward reemployment. The primary offices will be as they were in PY 2002: Concord, Keene, Laconia, Portsmouth, and Salem. As with the previous program year, this philosophy will continue to be extended to the remaining eight offices. With this objective in place, all the offices will be focused on direct reemployment service delivery to the UI claimant population in their area.

Training for staff is part of NHES' ongoing curriculum. Basic employment service training has been provided to all staff working with those individuals in need of reemployment service. Follow up from this basic reemployment service training has indicated the need for more advanced training in several main areas. In an effort to meet these needs, staff will be receiving more extensive training on assessment interviewing, job referral, job development, and the job order process. The individual providing this training, and the requisite work needed to get this training operational, will be funded by Wagner-Peyser and not the reemployment service monies.

In conjunction with an increased need for job development for some of the UI claimants, the staff in all the offices will also be refocusing their efforts on the employer community. This will include more employer contact, either by phone or in person. The purpose of these contacts will be to promote the claimant to the employer in an effort to secure employment. A potential secondary effect of this employer contact will be an increase in the number of job orders in our system, enhancing the employability options of not only the UI claimants but also all those individuals who access our system.

A second objective is the continued design of a more consistent process, including policies and procedures, to be employed by all of the offices. This process will include the selection of UI claimants, the frequency of scheduling, services provided to this customer base, and a reporting procedure.

All of the above objectives will have a completion date of June 30, 2005 and a report will be submitted 90 days after the start of the project and a final report will be submitted by September 30, 2005. All Wagner-Peyser staff, including the staff involved in this initiative, are located in the NH WORKS Centers. These centers serve as the One-Stop delivery system for the State of New Hampshire.

Outcome Expected/Target Population: Increase entered employment rate of UI claimants

For the program year ending June 30, 2000, the number of claimants entering employment on the ETA 9002 was 5,012. For the program year ending June 30, 2001, the number of claimants entering employment on the ETA 9002 was 5,739. For the program year ending June 30, 2002, the same report shows the number of claimants entering employment at 7,863. The comparison of these statistics with the count of claimants who received a reportable service during the same time period reflects an entered employment rate of 49%, 46%, and 54%, respectively, for the program years

mentioned. The entered employment rate used in this paragraph is based on the definition used in the ETA 9002 prior to July 1, 2002.

Comparable statistics for program year ending June 30, 2003 and June 30, 2004 are no longer available due to changes in the reporting requirements for the ETA 9002 report. The data for the program year ending June 30, 2003 indicates the following. The ETA 9002C indicates that of the claimants registered from July 1, 2002 to June 30, 2003 who satisfy the definitions of the ETA 9002C, 24,207 entered employment for an entered employment rate of 72%. Of the 24,207 who entered employment, 18,021 entered employment after receiving some staff assisted services, for an entered employment rate following staff assisted services of 74%. Comparable numbers for the program year ending June 30, 2004 (PY 2003) are not available at this time.

The target population for this initiative will continue to be those claimants who are unemployed due to lack of work and have no return to work date with any employer. The primary outcome expected is a 15% increase in the entered employment number for UI claimants served by the local offices, representing a total increase of approximately 3,500 claimants entering employment over the PY 2002 statistics. To achieve this outcome, quarterly performance measures for the number of UI claimants entering employment have been set for each of the offices. The expected outcome for all of the offices will be an increase of approximately 875 claimants entering employment on a quarterly basis. The staff activity reports generated by NHES will track this outcome on a monthly basis in order to ensure local offices remain on target.

As NHES designs a more consistent approach for selecting, tracking, and working with the UI claimant base, the reemployment services provided to this population will become more focused. This increased focus will ensure better quality service to the claimant, designed to suit the needs of the individual customer.

Following the lead of the new Wagner-Peyser and Veterans' performance measures, the entered employment outcome will be tracked through the use of the Job Match System (JMS) and the wage record system in NH. The process used to achieve this outcome will not be tracked, as the outcome is what is of importance for these claimants.

Process for the Reemployment Service for UI Claimants

The targeted UI population will be those claimants who are unemployed due to lack of work and do not have an attachment to the labor market; that is, the claimant has no start work date with an employer. This population is most likely to receive UI benefits, therefore categorized as claimants in NH, and have a need for staff assisted reemployment services in their search for new employment. NH now takes all initial claims via the Internet. The determination of whether or not a claimant meets the stated criteria is achieved through the use of a computer program which identifies those individuals who have filed a claim without an associated return to work date. Claimants meeting the requirements are notified by letter to report to their local office for reemployment services. At a minimum, each claimant is required to attend a Benefit

Rights Orientation and four distinct Eligibility Review Interview (ERI) workshops. Benefit Rights Orientation sessions are, for the most part, scheduled the week following the filing of the initial claim. The first ERI workshop, entitled *Job Applications, Resumes and Cover Letters, Networking*, is scheduled after the claimant has filed for three weeks, the second ERI workshop, entitled *Interviewing*, is scheduled after the claimant has filed for six weeks, the third, entitled *Re-energizing Your Worksearch*, after nine weeks have been filed, and the fourth, entitled *Now What? Where Do I Go from Here?*, after fifteen weeks have been filed. Studies have shown that early intervention can be very effective in the reemployment efforts for UI claimants.

What is different from this initiative and the profiling program is some of the selection criteria that will be used for this application. In this program, UI claimants will be chosen even though they are not expected to exhaust their benefits; regardless of the number of employers they have had in the recent past or the length of time spent with the last employer; and regardless of the educational level the individual has attained. This is in direct contrast to the selection criteria used for screening UI claimants for the profiling program.

Upon selection, the claimant is directed to self-register in JMS. This client based server application is the labor exchange system used in the NH WORKS Centers for the purposes of employment service/Wagner-Peyser. Claimants who are deemed to also need one-on-one assistance have an assessment interview with the appropriate staff person. This assessment interview includes the review of the registration to ensure that the claimant has entered the appropriate information and an assessment of the claimant's skills, knowledge, and abilities.

The assigned staff person works with the claimant, providing the appropriate services. These services may include, but are not limited to: job referrals, job developments, interviewing workshops, resume writing workshops, job search workshops, case management, placement, and obtained employment. Claimants are encouraged to increase the scope of their job search efforts by expanding the area in which they look for employment and by contacting as many employers as is possible who may have a need in the claimant's primary and secondary occupations. The main focus of this process is geared to a structured and comprehensive job search assistance program monitored by the appropriate staff person. All of the services provided to the claimant are recorded on the service screen in JMS.

The occupational coding system used in JMS has been converted to the O*Net SOC occupational coding system. This coding system enhances the skill based information received from claimants and employers creating a more efficient and effective system when matching the skills and abilities of claimants with employer needs for these same skills and abilities. The staff also have the capability to use a web crawler developed by EmployOn. This system is designed to search for every job posted on a web site in NH commensurate with the search criteria listed at the time of the search. The system will also search, based on the criteria, for any job posted within 25 miles of the NH border. Some of the search criteria for this system are occupational title, key word, distance, etc.

This tool provides staff and claimants a much broader base of job opportunities in a user-friendly environment.

All claimants have access to the information and programs available in the NH WORKS Centers. These centers are staffed by individuals representing the various programs mandated by the Workforce Investment Act, along with some programs that have requested to be part of the center activities, such as the New Hampshire Employment Program. If it is found that a claimant selected for this initiative is in need of any of the supportive services provided by these co-located partners, referrals can be made without the customer having to leave the office. A critical component of the NH WORKS Centers is the Resource Center. Each resource center in the offices provides the customer with a wealth of information that can be accessed in a self-directed style. Some of the services available are: job listings for the state and the nation, automated job matching from our Job Match System, telephones for local access, fax, copier, laser printer, Internet access, access to WinWay, O*Net assessment tools, and Word, library of employment related books and videos, TV/VCR, typing tutorial on the personal computer, and pamphlets and brochures from the various organizations and programs serving the community. All of the centers are accessible to those individuals with a disability and the material is available with the assistive technology that is housed in each of the centers. Individuals who are funded through the Wagner-Peyser Program staff the resource centers, on a full time basis. These staff are assigned to the resource centers to assist any customer, be they claimant or non-claimant, with whatever the customer may need in the form of reemployment or support services.

The staff person in the local office will correspond with the claimant, on a regular basis, through in-person visits, telephone, letter, e-mail, etc. until the claimant has reached the expected outcome of reemployment. In-person visits will be scheduled through a letter produced by JMS and will occur no less than once every three weeks. The follow up outlined here will ensure that the staff person and the claimant remain in contact throughout the entire delivery of reemployment services.

It has been shown that this type of personalized attention can have a very positive effect on the working relationship between the staff person and the customer. This is due to the fact that a one-on-one relationship is established between the two parties involved, providing the customer with the sense that someone is assisting them and looking out for their best interest, as well as, providing a sense of accomplishment for the staff person when the customer becomes reemployed. NHES will use this personalized approach for the claimants selected for this initiative.

What has been outlined thus far in this section are the activities involved for the achievement of the first and second objectives previously discussed; that of direct reemployment services to the selected claimants and the development and use of a more consistent system with the primary outcome of reemployment.

NHES currently produces a monthly report, which lists the number of direct and non-direct placements achieved by each staff person. The information provided in this report

is for all Wagner-Peyser customers, including those who are UI claimants. In order to measure the success of this plan, the appropriate statistics will be tracked and monitored on a monthly basis.

In conclusion, this process and the tracking of placements and obtained employments will focus the staff on the positive reemployment outcomes for the UI claimants selected for this program. This approach, and early intervention for the UI claimants, will ensure that claimants receive direct reemployment services leading to new employment in the shortest amount of time possible.